

HEART OF AMERICA

September 2005
Volume 1, Number 9

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS REVIEW

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS UNITS OF IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI AND NEBRASKA

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Message from the Surgeon General.....	1
MRC Units Across Region Support Hurricane Response and Recovery Efforts.....	2
Save the Date: Regional MRC Conference	2
Upcoming Events	2
Northeast MO MRC Members in the News.....	3
New Contact Information for Region VII	
MRC Coordinator.....	3
Updating Unit Profiles on the MRC Website	3

REGION VII



Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona

A Message from the Surgeon General

The following is a message from Surgeon General Richard Carmona to the Medical Reserve Corps on September 18, 2005:

The Medical Reserve Corps program made history [in September] as the federal government deployed its first teams of MRC members to care for people along the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast. This was the first time we have activated members of the Medical Reserve Corps. And I am quite proud and honored that your MRC units were here to help.

This terrible disaster has proven how valuable the Medical Reserve Corps program is to the nation, as well as to the communities that each of your units serve. In addition to the more than 400 MRC members who volunteered through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 600 of you offered to help through a remarkable partnership with the American Red Cross.

Some of you suffered losses yourselves. But that didn't stop your spirit and dedication to serve. Medical Reserve Corps members in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana staffed shelters and medical clinics to care for thousands of their neighbors.

And I hear stories every day about the tremendous work you are doing around the country.

Thousands of Houston area MRC members, for example, cared for evacuees who fled their flooded cities and towns for the protection offered by the Lone Star State. In Albuquerque, MRC members are staffing a

Office of Public Health and Science, Department of Health and Human Services, Region VII
601 E. 12th Street, Room S1801, Kansas City, MO 64106 (816) 426-2829 (816) 426-2178 Fax

telephone hotline for evacuees coming into their area. Nearly all of the [315] MRC units in the country have been active in the wake of this catastrophe. This includes recruiting more MRC members to be credentialed, trained and ready to respond to the next disaster. This also includes providing training and emergency preparedness education to your neighbors, filling in for medical professionals who have been deployed to the Gulf region, fund-raising for the victims and evacuees, and, of course, caring for the thousands of evacuees who now call your communities home.

You have done an amazing job in response to such a colossal event. I sincerely thank you for the unwavering support you and your units have provided to your neighbors and your nation.

Richard H. Carmona, MD, MPH, FACS
VADM, U.S. Public Health Service

MRC Units Across Region Support Hurricane Response and Recovery Efforts

MRC units throughout Region VII supported (and continue to support) hurricane response and recovery operations, both in their local communities and with volunteers deployed to the affected areas. Examples of hurricane response and recovery activities undertaken by some of these MRCs include:

The [Sedgwick County MRC](#) deployed a physician to the affected area. In addition, unit volunteers participated in "Operation Sunflower," Kansas' effort to prepare for the arrival of 1,800 to 2,000 expected evacuees from hurricane-stricken areas. Although no evacuees were received, the Sedgwick County MRC gained around 30 new volunteers (including 11 behavioral health specialists, 10 nurses, 7 pharmacists, a physician and a psychologist) through their involvement in this effort.

Several medical and non-medical volunteers from the [Shawnee County MRC](#) participated in an exercise of the county's evacuee health screening process. This activity was designed as preparation for "Operation Sunflower."

The [Metropolitan Omaha MRC](#) conducted health assessments for 166 evacuees at the Omaha ARC shelter. At this shelter, MRC pharmacists worked with Walgreen's to dispense medications to evacuees and MRC behavioral/mental health specialists, along with the ARC, provided counseling services. This MRC unit has also deployed 7 volunteers to the Gulf Coast area.

The [Mid-America MRC](#) set-up a "Hurricane Katrina" page on their website, and had a spot on local television, which brought in many new volunteers. They also sent out notices to MRC volunteers to assist in an evacuee service center and in local American Red Cross (ARC) shelter staffing assignments.

The [Northeast MO MRC](#) had six volunteers complete and submit applications to deploy with the ARC: 1 volunteer deployed to Baton Rouge, LA; 1 volunteer deployed via the Peace Corps; and 1 volunteer deployed to Montgomery, AL. Volunteers in the local area have also offered mental health assistance to evacuees entering the region.

The [Columbia/Boone County MRC](#) activated 13 volunteers to help support the local ARC shelter and service center operation for evacuees. One volunteer was deployed by FEMA as a rescue specialist.

Save the Date: Regional MRC Conference

The fourth quarterly Region VII MRC conference will be held on November 2, 2005 in the Kansas City area. The regional conference will feature speakers, educational presentations and plenty of opportunities for networking and discussions.

For more information, contact Gary Brown, Regional MRC Coordinator, at (816) 426-2829 or by e-mail at gbrown2@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Upcoming Events and Training

2005 Homeland Security Summit: Partnering for Preparedness. October 12-14, 2005 in Arlington, VA. Sponsored by the Performance Institute. For more information, visit <http://homelandsecurityweb.org/hss/>.

National Disaster Mental Health Conference. October 20-22, 2005 in Estes Park, CO. Organized by the Rocky Mountain Region Disaster Mental Health Institute. For more information, call (307) 399-4818, visit <http://www.rmrinstitute.org/Estes-Conference.html>.

IAEM 2005 Annual Conference and EMEX. November 12-16, 2005 in Phoenix, AZ. Sponsored by the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). For more information, visit the conference website at <http://www.iaem.com/events/annual/intro.htm>.

American Public Health Association (APHA) 133rd Annual Meeting and Exposition. December 10-14, 2005 in Philadelphia, PA. For more information, see the APHA website at http://www.apha.org/meetings/new_orleans_update.htm.

Northeast Missouri MRC Members in the News

Recently, two volunteers from the Northeast Missouri MRC in Kirksville were featured in news stories aired by KTVO Channel 3. Cora Elrod, a registered nurse, supported hurricane response and recovery operations in Louisiana and recently returned home to Kirksville. Toni Smith, an anesthesiologist at Northeast Regional Medical Center in Kirksville, is currently in Mississippi assisting with hurricane response and recovery efforts. The news story describing the experiences of these MRC volunteers in the hurricane-affected areas is available at the KTVO website:

<http://www.ktvotv3.com/Global/story.asp?S=3913604>. A video of this news story is also available at this website.

In addition, KTVO Channel 3 also interviewed Carmen Stanton, Northeast Missouri MRC Coordinator, in a news story on emergency preparedness in Missouri. This news story is available at the following website:

<http://www.ktvotv3.com/Global/story.asp?S=3918999>. A video of this story is also available at this website.

New Contact Information for Region VII MRC Coordinator

Gary Brown, Regional MRC Coordinator, now has a cellular phone number: **(301) 793-8733**. Other contact information remains unchanged, and includes:

Office of Public Health and Science
Department of Health and Human Services, Region VII
601 East 12th Street, Room S1801
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 426-2829 Office
(301) 793-8733 Cellular
(816) 426-2178 Fax
gbrown2@osophs.dhhs.gov
www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Updating Unit Profiles on the MRC Website

As a registered Medical Reserve Corps Director and/or Coordinator, you have permission to change the contact information for your unit on the MRC website. To make adjustments to your unit's contact information, log-on to

the MRC website (www.medicalreservecorps.gov) using the username and password you created at registration. Once logged in, you will be given the option in the left-hand frame of the website to "Edit MRC Unit." Click on this tab. The next page will include the fields for your MRC unit, which you have the ability to maintain and keep accurate. These fields include:

- ☐ Unit name
- ☐ Jurisdiction
- ☐ Sponsoring organization
- ☐ Point of contact's name
- ☐ Unit address
- ☐ Phone number
- ☐ E-mail address
- ☐ Website address
- ☐ Activation plan
- ☐ Emergency 24/7 contact information
- ☐ Brief unit description
- ☐ Current activities

You may change or update your unit information as often as you like. However, the MRC national program office requests that you update this information at least once every three months. It is important to update your unit profile on a regular basis. Your unit profile may be one of the first places a potential MRC volunteers goes to find information about joining your unit. If your unit profile does not contain any information, or if it contains old information, the individual may lose interest in becoming a part of your unit, and you may have lost a potential volunteer. In addition, current unit contact information is very important during emergencies, when local officials or the MRC national program office may need to contact you quickly.

After making any corrections, simply click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page. This will save your updates and post them to the MRC website for all to reference. Please keep in mind that only the MRC national program office staff and you are able to see the emergency contact and activation process information. This information will not be shared with other users of the MRC website.

If you have any technical issues with this feature, please e-mail the Webmaster at MRCWebmaster@z-techcorp.com. For all other questions, feel free to contact the MRC national program office at (301) 443-4951 or MRCcontact@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Thank you very much for ensuring your unit profile is current and reflects your activities and contributions to your communities!